

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-26 (canceled)

27. (currently amended) A spinal fixation ~~system plate having a longitudinal axis, the spinal fixation plate~~ comprising:

a spinal fixation plate having a longitudinal axis comprising:

 a first section having at least one bore formed therein for receiving a bone anchor effective to mate the first section to a first vertebra;

 a second section having at least one bore formed therein for receiving a bone anchor effective to mate the second section to a second vertebra, at least one of the second section and the first section being adjustable with respect to the other section along a longitudinal axis of the plate; and

 a polyaxial bushing mounted in at least one bore, the polyaxial bushing configured to permit polyaxial rotation of the bushing within the at least one bore, the polyaxial bushing having a plurality of ridges formed on a radially outer surface of the bushing and having a generally smooth radially interior surface that defines a passage for receiving a bone anchor; and

a bone anchor having a proximal head and a distal bone engaging portion, the proximal head having a generally smooth outer surface for mating with the generally smooth radially interior surface of the polyaxial bushing.

28. (currently amended) The spinal fixation ~~plate system~~ of claim 27, further comprising a dynamic connection mechanism configured to control relative motion of the second section and the first section, the dynamic connection mechanism comprising a longitudinally oriented slot formed in the first section and a pin fixed to the second section and sized to slidably engage the slot formed in the first section.

29. (currently amended) The spinal fixation plate system of claim 27, wherein the at least one bore of the first section and the at least one bore of the second section are positioned at opposing ends of the spinal fixation plate and the at least one bore of the first section has a first bore axis and the at least one bore of the second section has a second bore axis that intersects the first bore axis on a side of the spinal fixation plate distal to the first and second vertebrae.

30. (currently amended) The spinal fixation plate system of claim 27, wherein the polyaxial bushing has a slot formed therein to permit radial expansion of the bushing.

Claims 31-32 (canceled)

33. (currently amended) The spinal fixation plate system of claim 31, wherein ~~a radially interior surface of the polyaxial bushing defines a~~ the passage of the polyaxial bushing for receiving a bone anchor, the passage tapering tapers from a distal end of the bushing to a proximal end of the bushing.

Claims 34-40 (canceled)